

Message Text

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ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY EA/K:DBLAKEMORE:FLW:MGH
APPROVED BY EA:RHOLBROOKE
EA:WHGLEYSTEN
S/S - LFLEISCHER

-----092932 210135Z /73

P 210059Z JAN 78 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY
INFO WHITE HOUSE PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 017104

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, KS, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR KIM CALLS ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY
HOLBROOKE

1. AMBASSADOR KIM CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE
AT THE LATTER'S REQUEST JANUARY 19 FOR A GENERAL REVIEW
OF U.S.-KOREA BILATERAL RELATIONS PRIOR TO THE AMBASSADOR'S
RETURN TO SEOUL ON CONSULTATIONS.

2. HOLBROOKE NOTED THAT 1977 HAD BEEN A DIFFICULT YEAR
IN U.S.-KOREA RELATIONS, AND THE U.S. IS DETERMINED TO
SEE AN IMPROVEMENT IN 1978. ALREADY THE SIGNS ARE GOOD.
THE AGREEMENT REACHED ON TONGSUN PARK AND THE RELEASE
OF NEARLY ALL THE MYONGDONG PRISONERS ARE EVIDENCE THAT
KOREA SHARES THIS DETERMINATION, AND THIS IS APPRECIATED

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HERE. PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK AND
HIS RECENT STATEMENT ON KOREA ARE CLEAR SIGNS OF OUR
INTENTIONS. WE ARE PREPARED TO FIGHT TO PUT US-ROK
RELATIONS BACK ON A SOUND FOOTING, BUT WE NEED ROKG HELP.
WITHOUT IT, CONGRESS WON'T PASS LEGISLATION.

3. AT HOLBROOKE'S REQUEST, GLEYSTEN REVIEWED THE TONGSUN

PARK SITUATION. HE SAID OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR PASSAGE OF THE EQUIPMENT TRANSFER LEGISLATION. TO

THIS END IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE ROKG CONTINUE TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE INVESTIGATIONS DESPITE THE EMBARRASSMENT THIS MAY CAUSE. THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATION IS NOW IN TRAIN; WITH REGARD TO THE CONGRESS WE SEE THE ETHICS COMMITTEES AS THE KEY. THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO DEVELOP A PRACTICAL APPROACH AND AN EFFECTIVE CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION FOR DEALING WITH THE CONGRESS. ON THE BASIS OF OUR DISCUSSIONS BOTH WITH THE COMMITTEES AND THE KOREAN SIDE, WE THINK A SATISFACTORY COMPROMISE CAN BE WORKED OUT. BUT THE KOREANS WILL HAVE TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THE BASIC NEEDS OF THE COMMITTEE (I.E. TONGSUN PARK WILL HAVE TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEES UNDER MUTUALLY-ACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS BEST WORKED OUT DIRECTLY WITH HUNDLEY AND PARK HIMSELF). FURTHERMORE, THE LONGER THE DELAY THE MORE DIFFICULT THE COMMITTEES' DEMANDS ARE LIKELY TO BE.

4. KIM APPEARED TO APPRECIATE THESE ARGUMENTS, NOTING HOWEVER THAT IT WILL TAKE CONSIDERABLY MORE EFFORT TO CONVINCE HIS GOVERNMENT IN SEOUL. HE REPORTED ON A MEETING HE HAD HAD WITH SPEAKER O'NEILL JANUARY 18 DURING WHICH O'NEILL URGED THAT TONGSUN PARK APPEAR BEFORE THE HOUSE ETHICS COMMITTEE IN EXECUTIVE SESSION
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PRIOR TO THE SCHEDULED START OF THE HANNA TRIAL ON MARCH 20. THE SPEAKER SAID THAT HE FAVORS CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE TRANSFER LEGISLATION, BUT WITHOUT SUCH TESTIMONY, IT WILL NOT BE ENACTED. IN RESPONSE TO KIM'S QUESTIONS ABOUT THE THREAT OF A SUBPOENA FROM THE FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE, O'NEILL REPORTEDLY REPLIED THAT THE KOREANS NEED NOT WORRY IF THEY COOPERATED WITH THE ETHICS COMMITTEES.

5. HOLBROOKE AND GLEYSTEN URGED THAT KIM ALSO SEE PETER WHITE, THE HOUSE ETHICS COMMITTEE DEPUTY SPECIAL COUNSEL BECAUSE KIM SHOULD HEAR DIRECTLY ABOUT THE COMMITTEE'S REQUIREMENTS. KIM WAS RELUCTANT TO MEET WITH WHITE BUT HE EVENTUALLY AGREED TO DO SO, MEETING WITH HIM FOR ABOUT AN HOUR AT THE DEPARTMENT. WE DELIBERATELY DID NOT PARTICIPATE, BUT WE UNDERSTAND FROM BOTH SIDES THAT THE TALK WAS CORDIAL AND USEFUL. WHITE TOLD US THAT HE WAS VERY FRANK IN SETTING OUT THE COMMITTEE'S REQUIREMENTS BUT HE AVOIDED THREATS, OFFERED TO BE HELPFUL ON THE QUESTION OF EASING KOREAN CONCERNS ABOUT THE FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE, AND SUGGESTED SOME FLEXIBILITY IN THE COMMITTEE'S DESIRE TO INTER-

VIEW KIM DONG JO AND LEE HU RAK.

6. ON A SEPARATE SUBJECT, AMBASSADOR KIM NOTED THAT
THE TRADITION OF SUMMIT MEETINGS BETWEEN U.S. AND KOREAN

PRESIDENTS HAS A DETERRENT VALUE AND HE WONDERED IF
SUCH A MEETING MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.
GLEYSTEN REPLIED THAT THE TIMING OF SUCH A MEETING
WOULD BE ALL IMPORTANT, AND IT IS PREMATURE TO DISCUSS
IT NOW. KIM ACCEPTED THIS. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, US CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS, INVESTIGATIONS, CAT-B, AMBASSADORS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE017104
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DBLAKEMORE:FLW:MGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840148-1566, N780001-0667
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780136/aaaabesf.tel
Line Count: 125
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5b0b25e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3734548
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR KIM CALLS ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE
TAGS: PGOV, KS, US, (TONGSUN PARK)
To: SEOUL WHITE HOUSE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5b0b25e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014